Approved For Release 2007/10/30 : CIA-RDP85M00363R001202740032-5

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+BAN-NUCLEAR-ZONE+

BONN, FEB 8, REUTER -- WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR HELMUT KOHL TODAY REJECTED SWEDISH AND SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR A BAN ON SHORT-RANGE NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

KOHL TOLD THE MASS-CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER BILD THAT SUCH A ZONE WAS ''NOT A POINT OF DISCUSSION FOR ME''.

THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT SENT A NOTE TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS LAST FALL PROPOSING AN EXCLUSION ZONE ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BORDER BETWEEN WARSAW PACT AND NATO COUNTRIES.

MOSCOW RECENTLY SUGGESTED A WIDER BAND EMBRACING ALMOST THE WHOLE OF EAST AND WEST GERMANY.

BONN GOVERNMENT SOURCES SAID EAST GERMAN LEADER ERICH HONECKER WROTE TO KOHL YESTERDAY, RAISING THE QUESTION ANEW.

WEST GERMAN AND NATO OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE PROPOSALS, ARGUING THAT A WEAKENING OF THE WEST'S NUCLEAR DETERRENT IN THIS WAY COULD TEMPT THE WARSAW PACT TO LAUNCH A CONVENTIONAL ATTACK.+

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